

Re: Docket numbers:

98N-1230

96P-0418

97P-0197

Bonnie West
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Torrington, CT 06010

4411 '99 SEP 20 A9:40

9-14-99

To whom it may concern:

Each year the US Egg industry force molts intentionally starves for up to 14 days---millions of hens to manipulate egg production. Forced molting is so stressful it destroys the hen's immune system, predisposing the birds and their eggs to salmonella poison. The US Dept. of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) stated: "FSIS recognizes that public health concerns are raised by highly stressful forced molting practices. For example, extended starvation and water deprivation practices lead to increased shedding of Salmonella enteritidis (Se) by laying hens subjected to these practices."

The FDA has jurisdiction to ban farm practices that injure human health. Therefore, the FDA should ban the practice of forced molting because forced molting has been scientifically shown to promote disease by destroying the starving hen's immune system. Forced molting of laying hens is the primary cause of infectious diseases in hens, eggs, and consumers of eggs.

The FDA was petitioned in April 1998 to ban forced molting. This petition should be granted without further delay. Putting Bacteria warning labels on egg cartons and regulating refrigeration temperatures is not enough to ensure human safety.

Sincerely,

Bonnie West

Robert West

96P-0418

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HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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CROSS REFERENCE SHEET

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96P-0418/C633